

SOL 5b - The student will demonstrate knowledge of the factors that shaped colonial America by describing life in the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Southern colonies, with emphasis on how people interacted with their environment to produce goods and services, including examples of specialization and interdependence.

Just as each of the colonies was established for different reasons, life in the three colonial regions differed, too. Let's learn about the differences in **geography, climate, resources, specialization, social life, and political life** of the **New England colonies**. We will also learn about **interdependence**, or how the New England colonies depended on other colonies for goods and services.

The New England colonies were located on wooded hills between the Appalachian Mountains on the west and the rugged Atlantic coastline on the east. The climate of this region was harsh with short, moderate summers and long, cold winters. Farming was difficult due to the short growing season and the thin rocky soil.

In order to make a living, many colonists in New England turned to their natural resources. Numerous natural harbors and the timber of this region caused the New Englanders to specialize in shipbuilding, fishing, and naval supplies. Bustling port cities grew up around the harbors of the region. **Boston Harbor** became a prosperous center of commerce in New England. In these busy port cities many colonists also made a living as skilled craftsmen and shopkeepers resulting in another resource for this colony: *a human resource*.

In the areas surrounding these busy port cities, colonists lived in smaller villages and towns where **the church was the center of their day to day life**. Many of the settlers of this region had tried and failed to reform the Church of England before setting sail for the New World. Others, called separatists, had simply wanted to separate themselves from the Church of England and worship as they chose.

The political life of the New England colonies revolved around the **town meeting**. These meetings were first held in churches by church leaders. Colonists would attend to hear and discuss the daily issues of village life. Later the meetings moved outside the church building and became the village political body. Citizens would meet to elect officers, set taxes, and settle community problems.

As resourceful as the New England colonies were, they still depended on the other colonies for goods and services. From the Southern Colonies they received raw materials such as cotton. The Middle Colonies supplied the New England Colonies with items such as grain and livestock.

